

PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

June 2019

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury



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June 25, 2019

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Speaker of the House of Representatives
The Honorable Kerry Roberts, Chair
Senate Committee on Government Operations
The Honorable Martin Daniel, Chair
House Committee on Government Operations
and
Members of the General Assembly
State Capitol
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Mr. Richard Kennedy, Executive Director Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth 502 Deaderick Street, 9th Floor Nashville, Tennessee 37243 and Ms. Brenda Davis, Commission Chair 1706 Townsend Boulevard Franklin, Tennessee 37064

Ladies and Gentlemen:

We have conducted a performance audit of selected programs and activities of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth for the period January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2019. This audit was conducted pursuant to the requirements of the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law, Section 4-29-111, *Tennessee Code Annotated*.

This report is intended to aid the Joint Government Operations Committee in its review to determine whether the commission should be continued, restructured, or terminated.

Sincerely,

Deborah V. Loveless, CPA, Director

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Division of State Audit

DVL/dw 19/044



Division of State Audit **Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth**

Performance Audit June 2019

Our mission is to make government work better.

AUDIT HIGHLIGHTS

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's Mission

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth advocates to improve the quality of life for children and families and provides leadership and support for child advocates.

We have audited the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth for the period January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2019. Our audit scope included a review of internal controls and compliance with laws, regulations,

Scheduled Termination Date:

June 30, 2020

policies, procedures, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements in the following areas:

- juvenile justice grants monitoring;
- public records management;
- commission requirements and conflict-of-interest disclosures;
- staff turnover analysis; and
- information systems.

KEY CONCLUSIONS

OBSERVATIONS

The following topics are included in this report because of their effect on the operations of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth and on the citizens of Tennessee:

- ➤ Commission management should ensure state monitoring policies and procedures are followed and should continue to improve its own internal processes for overall subrecipient monitoring (page 17).
- ➤ Commission management should implement the Records Management Division's recommendations and ensure that all of its public records are governed by a records disposition authorization (page 20).

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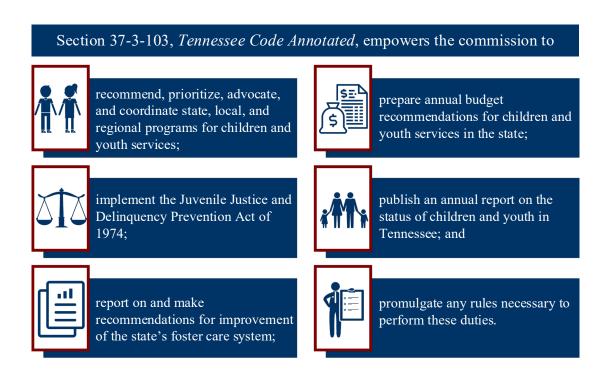
INTRODUCTION

AUDIT AUTHORITY

This performance audit of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth was conducted pursuant to the Tennessee Governmental Entity Review Law, Title 4, Chapter 29, *Tennessee Code Annotated*. Under Section 4-29-241, the commission is scheduled to terminate June 30, 2020. The Comptroller of the Treasury is authorized under Section 4-29-111 to conduct a limited program review audit of the agency and to report to the Joint Government Operations Committee of the General Assembly. This audit is intended to aid the committee in determining whether the commission should be continued, restructured, or terminated.

BACKGROUND

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth was created in 1988 when the Tennessee General Assembly combined the Tennessee Children's Services and Juvenile Justice commissions. *Tennessee Code Annotated* establishes the Commission on Children and Youth as a 21-member policymaking body whose members are appointed by the Governor. According to Section 37-3-102, *Tennessee Code Annotated*, the commission should "serve as an informational resource and advocacy agency for the efficient and effective planning, enhancement and coordination of state, regional and local policies, programs and services to promote and protect the health, well-being and development of all children and youth in Tennessee." As of January 16, 2019, the commission had 32 employees.



The commission has undertaken the following projects and initiatives to implement its legislatively required duties:

Children and Youth Services

• There are nine Regional Councils on Children and Youth across the state that consist



of children's services professionals and citizens interested in improving the lives of Tennessee children. The councils provide statewide networking and training opportunities for their 3,341 members (as of June 30, 2018); address the needs of children and families at the regional level; and offer local-level feedback to the commission. The commission staffs and coordinates the nine councils.

• <u>Building Strong Brains Tennessee</u> is a statewide strategy launched in November 2015 by Bill and Crissy Haslam, then Governor and

First Lady. The strategy seeks to establish Tennessee as a national model for promoting culture change in early childhood based on the idea that preventing and mitigating adverse childhood experiences is the most promising way to help Tennessee children lead productive, healthy lives and to ensure the state's future prosperity. Since the effort's inception, the commission has served on the coordinating team¹ and the public sector steering group.² Since July 1, 2017, the Department of Children's Services has provided federal funding to the commission to help raise public awareness by training individuals to teach that adverse childhood experiences, such as domestic violence and addiction in early childhood, increase the risk for chronic illnesses, poverty, depression, and addictive behaviors in later life.

• The Governor's Children's Cabinet established <u>kidcentral tn</u>,³ a website that features articles on health, education, and development, as well as a searchable directory for state-sponsored services for children and families. Governor Haslam transferred responsibility for the website's management to the commission in 2018.

¹ The coordinating team members include representatives from the commission, the Department of Children's Services, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Adverse Childhood Experiences Awareness Foundation, and the Casey Family Programs. The coordinating team is responsible for ensuring that groups working on Building Strong Brains Tennessee are acting together and are paying attention to changing conditions and arising opportunities in the early childhood world so that the necessary adaptations can be made to the statewide strategy.

² The public steering group, composed of representatives from child-serving departments and agencies such as the Division of TennCare and the Department of Education, meets regularly to help guide the state's collective efforts toward a more trauma-informed system.

³ https://www.kidcentraltn.com/.

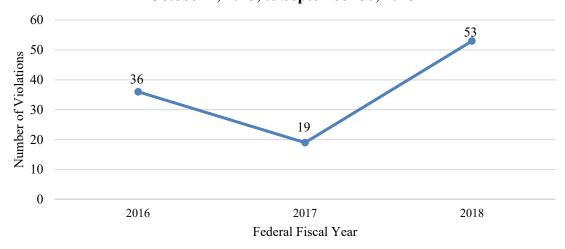
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act

• The Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group was originally established by executive order in 1975 and was included in the public act that established the commission in 1988. The commission's advisory group is responsible for implementing the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 in Tennessee. The act has four core requirements: deinstitutionalize status offenders,⁴ remove



children from adult jails, separate children from adult offenders, and address disproportionate minority contact.⁵ The deinstitutionalized status offender provision of the Federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 seeks to ensure that status offenders who have not committed a criminal offense are not held in secure juvenile facilities for extended periods of time or in secure adult facilities for any length of time, but that they receive community-based services, such as day treatment or residential home treatment; counseling; mentoring; family support; and alternative education. To ensure compliance with this provision, the commission monitors local law enforcement and detention centers to ensure that juveniles are not held in adult facilities. See **Chart 1** for the number of deinstitutionalized status offender violations the commission noted from October 1, 2015, to September 30, 2018.

Chart 1
Deinstitutionalization of Status Offenders
by Local Jails and Detention Facilities
October 1, 2015, to September 30, 2018



Source: Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's 2019 annual report and commission staff.

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⁴ Status offenses only apply to minors whose actions would not be considered offenses if they were adults, such as skipping school, running away, breaking curfew, and possession or use of alcohol.

⁵ "Disproportionate minority contact" refers to the disproportionate number of minority children who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.

The Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group administers state and federal funds to counties, state agencies, and community programs to prevent delinquency or improve services for children involved with juvenile courts. Additionally, it monitors juvenile facilities in Tennessee to ensure compliance with federal placement requirements.

Tennessee's Foster Care Mediator



• The commission's staff includes an Ombudsman, who serves as a third-party mediator for children in the custody of the Department of Children's Services (DCS), Child Protective Services, or the kinship care/relative caregiver program. The Ombudsman program was launched by the commission in 1996 and takes referral complaints from children, families, legislators, national organizations, child advocates, attorneys, school personnel, juvenile courts, case workers, service providers, and other stakeholders or concerned individuals. These complaints may include allegations of abuse, neglect, and misconduct.

In response to a referral, the Ombudsman may investigate; access records, such as DCS case managers' notes, court orders, psychological evaluations, education and health records, and DCS custody petitions; and interview children, families, and agency staff to resolve problems and make recommendations. After completing the investigation and concluding on the complaint in the referral, the Ombudsman closes the referral file. See **Table 1** for the number of referrals the Ombudsman received and closed from July 1, 2015, through December 31, 2018.

Table 1 Ombudsman Referrals July 1, 2015, Through December 31, 2018

	Number of	Number of
Period	Referrals	Closures
July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016	154	98
July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2017	100	85
July 1, 2017, to June 30, 2018	149	112
July 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018	61	36

Source: Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's annual report and commission staff.

Annual Reports on Children and Youth

• The commission was originally awarded the <u>KIDS COUNT</u>⁶ grant in 1992 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a private national foundation, and the foundation continues to provide state legislators, public officials, and child advocates with reliable data, policy recommendations, and tools needed to advance sound policies that benefit children and families. The foundation provides the KIDS COUNT Data Center⁷ with county-level data, which is used in KIDS COUNT data publications and the annual publication *KIDS COUNT: The*



State of the Child in Tennessee. The 2018 national KIDS COUNT Data Book ranks Tennessee 35th in overall child well-being.

• In 2008, the General Assembly tasked the commission with creating the annual Resource Map of Expenditures for Tennessee Children report. The Resource Mapping program examines expenditures from all state agencies that serve children and publishes the results in this annual report. The commission analyzes the data by funding source, program goal, geographic availability, level of intervention, and location of services. The commission reported that for fiscal year 2017, 28 state agencies served the state's children and youth with over \$9.8 billion. The report also informs the General Assembly of any missed federal funding opportunities.

RELATED ENTITIES

The Council on Children's Mental Health,⁸ the Second Look Commission,⁹ the Home Visiting Leadership Alliance,¹⁰ the Young Child Wellness Council,¹⁰ and the Youth Transitions Advisory Council are related to the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's mission and function.

In 2008, the state legislature established the <u>Council on Children's Mental Health</u> within the commission to develop a coordinated statewide system of mental health services that are child-centered, family-driven, and culturally and linguistically competent. The council is co-chaired by the commission's Executive Director and the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and includes a broad range of stakeholders in children's mental health care from across the state.

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⁶ KIDS COUNT, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, produces a comprehensive report that assesses child well-being in the United States.

⁷ The KIDS COUNT Data Center houses hundreds of key child and family well-being indicators and more than four million data points at the national and local levels.

⁸ The Council on Children's Mental Health is not scheduled to terminate until June 30, 2022, and was not included in our audit work.

⁹ The Second Look Commission was included in an audit report released on November 30, 2016, and is not scheduled to terminate until June 30, 2021. Therefore, the commission was not included in our audit work.

¹⁰ The Home Visiting Leadership Alliance and the Young Child Wellness Council are funded by the Department of Health, so they were not included in our audit work.

In 2010, the state legislature created the <u>Second Look Commission</u> within the commission to review a sample of cases involving a second or subsequent incident of severe child abuse investigated by the Department of Children's Services and to report annually to the state legislature whether the response to these cases provides adequate protection for the children of Tennessee. The Second Look Commission includes representatives from the legislature, the Department of Children's Services, law enforcement, courts, child abuse service providers, and the advocacy community.

The <u>Home Visiting Leadership Alliance</u> was created in January 2016 to explore results-based financing mechanisms and to develop sustainable plans for evidence-based home visiting ¹¹ programs in Tennessee. The alliance was created through a grant agreement between the Commission on Children and Youth and the Department of Health, which are responsible for the administrative and fiscal duties of the alliance, respectively. The alliance includes leadership from home visiting programs, state departments, and other stakeholders from across the state.

The Young Child Wellness Council was created in 2013 when the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council and the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems State Action Team merged. Administered by the commission and funded through a grant agreement with the Department of Health, the council seeks to improve the well-being of children by improving collaboration among child-serving agencies and programs. The council also serves as the advisory committee for Tennessee's Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program, a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to administer evidence-based home visiting programs and support the state's early childhood system of care. Council membership includes representatives from state agencies, private care providers, advocates, and families from all over the state.

In 2009, the legislature's Select Committee on Children and Youth created the <u>Youth Transitions Advisory Council</u> to extend foster care services to youth in state custody who age out of the child welfare and juvenile justice systems. These services assist young people who age out of state custody in completing a high school diploma, GED, or high school equivalency test, as

well as post-secondary education. The council makes recommendations to the Department of Children's Services, courts, schools, higher education, and service providers to improve outcomes for successful transitions from adolescence to adulthood.

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's organizational chart is on page 7.

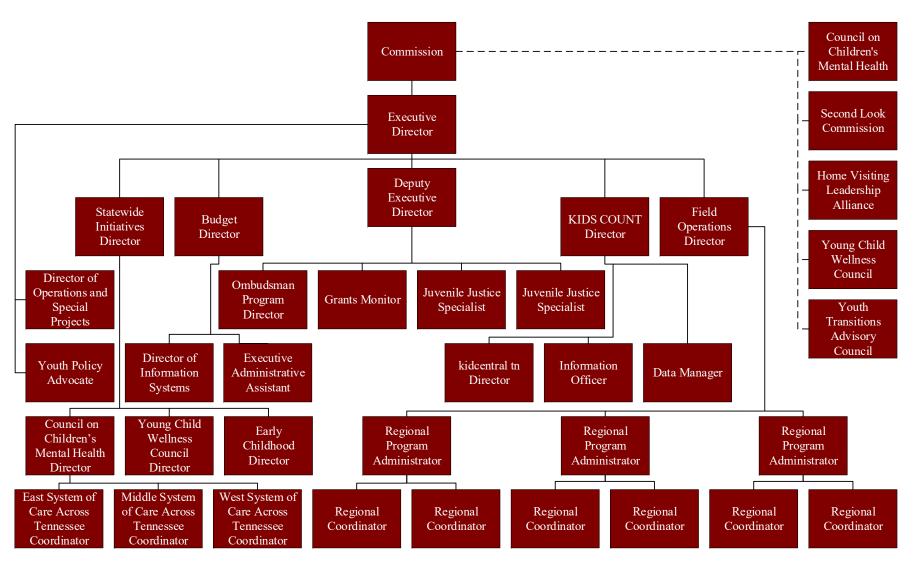
The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's business unit code in Edison is 31601.

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¹¹ The home visiting programs improve the health of at-risk children by reaching out to pregnant women, expectant fathers, parents, and caregivers of children under the age of five.

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth

Organizational Chart January 2019



Source: Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth management.

AUDIT SCOPE

We have audited the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth for the period January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2019. Our audit scope included a review of internal controls and compliance with laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements in the following areas:

- juvenile justice grants monitoring;
- public records management;
- commission requirements and conflict-of-interest disclosures;
- staff turnover analysis; and
- information systems.

Commission management is responsible for establishing and maintaining effective internal control and for complying with applicable laws, regulations, policies, procedures, and provisions of contracts and grant agreements.

For our sample design, we used nonstatistical audit sampling, which was the most appropriate and cost-effective method for concluding on our audit objectives. Based on our professional judgment, review of authoritative sampling guidance, and careful consideration of underlying statistical concepts, we believe that nonstatistical sampling provides sufficient appropriate audit evidence to support the conclusions in our report. Although our sample results provide reasonable bases for drawing conclusions, the errors identified in these samples cannot be used to make statistically valid projections to the original populations. We present more detailed information about our methodologies in the individual sections of this report.

We conducted our audit in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PRIOR AUDIT FINDINGS

Section 8-4-109(c), *Tennessee Code Annotated*, requires that each state department, agency, or institution report to the Comptroller of the Treasury the action taken to implement the recommendations in the prior audit report. The prior audit report of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth was dated July 18, 2016, and contained two findings. The commission

filed its report with the Comptroller of the Treasury on January 27, 2017. We conducted a followup of the prior audit findings as part of the current audit.

RESOLVED AUDIT FINDINGS

The current audit disclosed that the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth resolved both previous audit findings concerning the supporting documentation of its subrecipient monitoring process and conflict-of-interest disclosure forms for commission staff and members.

AUDIT CONCLUSIONS

MONITORING OF JUVENILE JUSTICE GRANTS

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth receives federal and state funds to administer juvenile justice grants that benefit and protect vulnerable youth affected by the juvenile justice system. As a pass-through entity for these grants, the commission provided personnel to administer the four grants listed on the next page and monitored subrecipient¹² performance to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations and provisions of the grant contracts.

Management hired a Grants Monitor on December 31, 2017, to monitor the commission's subrecipients. The Grants Monitor's duties include

- preparing the commission's annual monitoring plan to submit to the Central Procurement Office (CPO),
- selecting subrecipients for monitoring,
- completing monitoring reviews,
- providing subrecipients with the results of their monitoring, and
- obtaining and approving subrecipients' corrective action plans.

The Grants Monitor has no staff; she is responsible for all monitoring duties.

¹² Subrecipients are third-party entities that receive federal program and state funds from the commission to carry out the grants' functions.



Federal Formula Grant

- Purpose: Plan for and implement the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.
- Source of Funding: U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Grant Award: October 1 September 30



Juvenile Justice Reimbursement Grant

- Purpose: Keep juveniles out of adult jails by offsetting the cost of placing youth in juvenile detention facilities for eligible jurisdictions.
- Source of Funding: U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Grant Award: October 1 September 30



Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Grant

- Purpose: Recruit, train, and supervise volunteers who serve as advocates for children whose placements are being decided by the courts.
- Source of Funding: Tennessee General Assembly appropriation
- Appropriation Period: July 1 June 30



Juvenile Accountability Block Grant (JABG)

- Purpose: Help states and communities develop and implement programs that hold youth accountable for delinquent behavior through graduated sanctions to keep youth from reoffending.
- Source of Funding: U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- Grant Award: March 13, 2014 March 12, 2018 (Discontinued)

Commission Responsibilities

The commission's monitoring plan outlines the overall strategy for its monitoring activities and demonstrates the commission's compliance with statewide subrecipient monitoring guidance provided in CPO Policy 2013-007, "Grant Management and Subrecipient Monitoring Policy and Procedures." All state agencies must submit an annual monitoring plan to the CPO by October 1 each year according to Section 9.2 of CPO Policy 2013-007. The commission's monitoring plan includes

- a list of all subrecipients,
- a list of subrecipients to be monitored,
- a description of monitoring cycles,
- the monitoring guides¹³ used during the reviews,
- information pertaining to monitoring staff,
- grants descriptions,
- the completed risk assessment,
- the criteria used to assign risk levels,
- a summary of the prior year's findings, and
- a description of the corrective action plan process.

Subrecipient Selection for Monitoring

The commission must monitor each subrecipient at least once every three years according to Section 9.1 of CPO Policy 2013-007. The Grants Monitor performs a risk assessment to determine which subrecipients will be monitored during any given monitoring cycle. ¹⁴ During the assessment, the Grants Monitor assigns a risk level—high, medium, or low—to each subrecipient depending on the subrecipient's grant type. See **Table 2**.

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¹³ The Grants Monitor creates and uses a monitoring guide, which outlines compliance areas to be reviewed during monitoring. The Grants Monitor documents her review by completing individual questions on the monitoring guide and attaching applicable grant-related documentation, such as information on recruiting, screening, selecting, and training volunteers, or copies of background checks. The Grants Monitor created and used a monitoring guide tailored to address the requirements of each of the commission's four grants.

¹⁴ The monitoring cycle is a period during which commission staff review subrecipients' compliance with grant-related requirements. For monitoring purposes, commission staff use the state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30) to review Court Appointed Special Advocate and Juvenile Justice Reimbursement Grants, and the federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) to review the Federal Formula Grants. Prior to its discontinuation, the Juvenile Accountability Block Grant's review period included the federal fiscal year cycle (October 1 through September 30).

Table 2
Subrecipient Risk Levels Determined by Grant 2019 Monitoring Cycle

Risk Levels	Risk Considerations	Federal Formula Grant	Juvenile Justice Reimbursement Grant	Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Grant
	All first-year subrecipients regardless of the award amount.	>	>	>
High	Any second-year or longer subrecipient that had five or more findings; eight or more observations; or a combination of seven or more findings and observations during the previous monitoring cycle.	>	•	•
	Any nonprofit or faith-based organization that received a grant award of \$100,000 or more.	>		
	Any CASA program that has had a significant change in its leadership.			•
Medium	Any second-year or longer subrecipient that had three to four findings; five to seven observations; or a combination of four to six findings and observations during the previous monitoring cycle.	>	•	•
	Any unit of government that received a grant award of \$100,000 or more.	>		
Low	Any second-year or longer subrecipient that had less than two findings; four observations; or a combination of two to three findings and observations during the previous monitoring cycle.	•	•	•
	Any second-year or longer subrecipient that received a grant award less than \$100,000.	~		

Source: The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's CPO-approved 2019 monitoring plan.

If the subrecipient's risk level is assessed as high or medium and/or the commission did not monitor the subrecipient during the past two years, the Grants Monitor will monitor the subrecipient during the next monitoring cycle.

Monitoring Review Types

During the monitoring cycle, the Grants Monitor performs two types of monitoring: site and desktop reviews. During both types of reviews, the Grants Monitor reviews various grant-related documentation for compliance with contractual provisions. For site reviews, the Grants Monitor physically visits and conducts her review of requested documentation at the subrecipients' location. Site reviews allow the Grants Monitor to discuss and clarify monitoring issues, concerns, and questions with the subrecipients' management and staff. For desktop reviews, the Grants Monitor requires subrecipients to submit requested documentation to the commission by a certain date. Desktop reviews do not afford the Grants Monitor or subrecipients an opportunity to discuss grant-related questions or concerns in person. The Grants Monitor documents her review and conclusions in a paper-based monitoring review file that the commission maintains at its Nashville office.

Results of Monitoring

After completing the monitoring review, the Grants Monitor notifies the subrecipient of the results of her review, including if the report resulted in no deficiencies. The Grants Monitor sends out the results of her monitoring in a report to the subrecipient the

Section 9.2.5 of CPO Policy 2013-007 states that the commission "shall issue reports summarizing any findings or observations identified during monitoring activities within thirty (30) business days of completing all field work."

same day or within one to two business days after she finalizes her review, regardless of the monitoring review type. For subrecipients with noted problems, the Grants Monitor requests a corrective action plan outlining the subrecipients' steps to address the deficiencies identified in the report.

Corrective Action Plans

To ensure corrective action, the Grants Monitor requires subrecipients to submit corrective action plans¹⁵ within 30 calendar days. The Grants Monitor reviews the corrective action plan to determine whether the subrecipient adequately addressed deficiencies in the monitoring report and whether the plan complies with Section 9.2.5 of CPO Policy 2013-007, which requires that subrecipients' corrective action plans include

- the name of the contact person responsible for the corrective action plan;
- the corrective actions to be taken; and
- the anticipated completion dates.

¹⁵ A corrective action plan outlines steps and actions subrecipients plan to take to address deficiencies that the Grants Monitor noted in the monitoring report.

According to Section 9.2.5 of CPO Policy 2013-007, the Grants Monitor has 30 business days from the initial submission to approve, reject, or request additional information about the subrecipient's corrective action plan. Once the corrective action plan is approved, the Grants Monitor closes the monitoring review file and considers the review complete.

Results of the Prior Audit

In the commission's July 2016 financial and compliance audit report, we reported that the commission did not monitor one subrecipient and the monitoring working papers did not contain adequate documentation to substantiate that all necessary monitoring steps were performed. In response to the prior audit finding, management concurred and stated they would revise the subrecipient monitoring plan and tools used to implement the plan to improve the monitoring process; implement strategies to assign and monitor contracts completed after the development of the monitoring plan; and implement written guidance for the review process.

Audit Results

1. Audit Objective: Did commission staff submit and obtain approval from the Central Procurement Office (CPO) for its 2018 and 2019 annual subrecipient monitoring plans?

Conclusion: Commission management could not provide any documentation showing that the commission's 2018 monitoring plan was submitted to and approved by CPO. See Observation 1. The Grants Monitor submitted and obtained

CPO approval for the 2019 monitoring plan.

2. Audit Objective: Did commission staff obtain and review subrecipients' applicable corrective action plans?

Conclusion: During the 2018 and 2019 monitoring cycles, the Grants Monitor obtained subrecipients' corrective action plans but approved some that did not have

all the required information. See Observation 1.

3. Audit Objective: Did commission staff ask subrecipients that received more than \$750,000

in federal and state funds whether the subrecipients obtained a financial

statement audit?

Conclusion: For the 2018 and 2019 monitoring cycles, the Grants Monitor asked

subrecipients whether they obtained a financial statement audit.

4. Audit Objective: Did commission management ensure subrecipients were monitored at least

once every three years as required by Section 9.1 of CPO Policy 2013-007,

"Grant Management and Subrecipient Monitoring Policy and Procedures"?

Conclusion: Commission management ensured that all subrecipients were monitored at

least once during a three-year period in the 2018 monitoring cycle.

However, until we brought it to her attention, the Grants Monitor did not include one subrecipient in the 2019 approved monitoring plan, an oversight that would have resulted in noncompliance with CPO Policy 2013-007. See **Observation 1**.

5. Audit Objective: In response to the prior audit finding, did commission staff monitor the subrecipients identified in the commission's 2018 and 2019 subrecipient monitoring plans?

Conclusion:

We found that during the 2018 monitoring cycle, commission staff monitored all subrecipients identified in the commission's 2018 monitoring plan. The 2019 monitoring cycle was in progress at the end of our audit period, March 31, 2019; therefore, we were not able to conclude whether commission staff monitored all subrecipients identified in its 2019 approved monitoring plan.

6. Audit Objective: In response to the prior audit finding, did commission staff sufficiently document in their working papers that all monitoring steps were completed as outlined by the commission's 2018 and 2019 subrecipient monitoring plans?

Conclusion:

The Grants Monitor did not always obtain documentation to support conclusions reached in her 2018 monitoring cycle working papers. However, in the 2019 monitoring cycle, the Grants Monitor created and used a new document to address this problem, and we found that all conclusions of the 2019 monitoring cycle we reviewed were properly supported. As a result, we will not repeat this portion of the prior finding.

Methodology to Achieve Objectives

To gain an understanding of the commission's subrecipient monitoring processes, procedures, and internal control, we conducted interviews with the Deputy Executive Director and the Grants Monitor. We also performed a walkthrough of the commission's monitoring review process with the Grants Monitor. We reviewed the commission's 2018 and 2019 monitoring plans with corresponding attachments; CPO Policy 2013-007, "Grant Management and Subrecipient Monitoring Policy and Procedures"; the 2018 Direct Appropriation Act; and applicable grant award and solicitation documents.

We obtained lists of all subrecipients that commission staff monitored during the 2018 and 2019 monitoring cycles. See **Table 3** for details of the monitoring cycles.

Table 3
2018 and 2019 Monitoring Cycle Periods
Considered for Audit Testwork

Grant	2018 Monitoring Cycle	2019 Monitoring Cycle
Federal Formula Grant	October 1, 2017, through	October 1, 2018, through
	September 30, 2018	September 30, 2019
Juvenile Justice	July 1, 2017, through	July 1, 2018, through
Reimbursement Grant	June 30, 2018	June 30, 2019
Court Appointed Special	July 1, 2017, through	July 1, 2018, through
Advocate Grant	June 30, 2018	June 30, 2019
Juvenile Accountability	October 1, 2017, through	Grant discontinued and not
Block Grant ¹⁶	March 12, 2018	monitored in the cycle
Period Considered for Our	July 1, 2017, through	July 1, 2018, through
Testwork	September 30, 2018	September 30, 2019

Source: The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's 2018 and 2019 monitoring plans, review files, and Deputy Executive Director.

We selected a nonstatistical, random sample of 25 from a population of 38 subrecipients and reviewed the monitoring review files prepared by commission staff during the 2018 monitoring cycle. We reviewed all four subrecipient monitoring review files completed as of April 1, 2019, from a population of 56 subrecipients the Grants Monitor planned to monitor during the 2019 monitoring cycle. We tested the 29 subrecipient monitoring review files to determine

- whether commission staff assigned a risk level to each subrecipient and whether the risk level determination was consistent with the commission's monitoring plan;
- whether commission staff documented in the monitoring files evidence to support questions answered on the monitoring guide;
- whether commission staff maintained evidence in the monitoring files regarding its distribution of monitoring report summaries to the subrecipients and the Comptroller of the Treasury;
- whether subrecipients and commission staff complied with corrective action plans; and
- whether commission staff retained applicable grant-related documents as shown on an inventory sheet in the monitoring files.

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¹⁶ The Juvenile Accountability Block Grant was discontinued in March 2018. The commission monitored its only grant subrecipient that participated in the program during the 2018 monitoring cycle in its entirety from the original contract start date, February 1, 2016, through the contract discontinuance on March 12, 2018.

¹⁷ The 2018 sample of 25 we reviewed included \$930,920 in subrecipient grant awards with a total grant contract maximum liability of \$1,791,893 awarded to 71 subrecipients.

¹⁸ The four 2019 subrecipients we reviewed included \$195,000 in subrecipient grant awards with a total grant contract maximum liability of \$2,009,537 awarded to 77 subrecipients.

We tested all 71 and 77 commission subrecipients for the 2018 and 2019 monitoring cycles, respectively, to determine whether commission management ensured that all commission subrecipients were monitored at least once within a three-year period as required by Section 9.1 of CPO Policy 2013-007.

<u>Observation 1 – Commission management should ensure state monitoring policies and procedures are followed and should continue to improve its own internal processes for overall subrecipient monitoring</u>

From our review of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth's subrecipient monitoring efforts, we found the following:

- Commission staff accepted subrecipients' corrective action plans that did not always contain all required information as described in the Central Procurement Office's (CPO) Policy 2013-007, "Grant Management and Subrecipient Monitoring Policy and Procedures."
- Annual monitoring plans prepared by a commission employee¹⁹ contained errors. No independent review of the plans was performed prior to submission.
- While the commission did issue monitoring reports, we could not determine if the commission issued those reports within 30 days from the end of field work as required by CPO Policy 2013-007, because the commission did not define the "end of field work" date.
- The commission did not establish an internal review process to evaluate the Grants Monitor's work.

According to the Deputy Executive Director, the issues noted occurred because appropriate internal policies and procedures were not in place and need development. When internal control processes are absent, management cannot ensure it achieves compliance in all areas of monitoring.

The Grants Monitor should provide additional training to subrecipients to ensure they understand the requirements for their corrective action plans. The Grants Monitor should ensure the corrective action plans adhere to CPO policy. Management should develop and then prepare written procedures for any internal control processes necessary to ensure its compliance with all state monitoring policies and procedures.

Management's Comment

We concur. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) is committed to properly and effectively monitoring subrecipients.

¹⁹ The Director of Field Operations prepared the commission's 2018 monitoring plan, which the Grants Monitor followed. The Grants Monitor prepared the 2019 monitoring plan.

TCCY will adopt the following internal procedures to ensure all corrective action plans will contain the required information.

The TCCY Grants Monitor will develop a checklist to ensure all corrective action plans contain at least the following information: the name of the contact person responsible for the corrective action plan, the corrective actions to be taken, and the anticipated completion date. The TCCY Grants Monitor will not approve any corrective action plan without all the required information. The TCCY Grants Monitor will report all subrecipients who do not have an approved corrective action plan by their respective due dates to the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division within five business days of the due date. Failure to timely submit a corrective action plan may result in the denial of reimbursement until the matter is rectified or in the refusal to enter into a contract with the proposed subrecipient.

The following action item will be included in the Grants Monitor's Individual Performance Plan: "The TCCY Grants Monitor shall submit a draft of the Annual Monitoring Plan to the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division at least two weeks prior to the due date of the Annual Monitoring Plan." The following action item will be included in the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division's Individual Performance Plan: "The TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division or a designee shall proofread the Annual Monitoring Plan and provide feedback to the Grants Monitor within five business days of receiving it."

In addition to the annual performance review process, TCCY will adopt the following internal procedure to evaluate the Grants Monitor's work. The TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division shall review at least one-third of the Grants Monitor's subrecipient files on an annual basis. The TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division will use CPO Policy 2013-007 requirements; applicable law; and internal policies, procedures, and checklists to evaluate the Grants Monitor's work. Opportunities for improvement identified by the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division will be shared with the Grants Monitor. The Grants Monitor will develop an action plan to address the opportunities for improvement and submit it to the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division does not approve the action plan as submitted, the TCCY Director of the Juvenile Justice Division and Grants Monitor will work together to develop an appropriate action plan.

The Deputy Executive Director and the Grants Monitor will define the date for the "end of field work" and use that date in all grants monitoring.

A strategy to provide additional training to subrecipients to ensure they understand the requirements for their corrective action plans will be developed and implemented. Furthermore, management will update and expand procedures to ensure TCCY's compliance with all state monitoring policies and procedures.

PUBLIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT

General Background

State law requires the Public Records Commission to determine and order the proper disposition of the state's public records and to direct the Tennessee Department of State's Records Management Division to initiate any action necessary to establish the regulation of record holding and management in any state agency. Section 10-7-301(6), *Tennessee Code Annotated*, defines public records as

all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, microfilms, electronic data processing files and output, films, sound recordings, or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental agency.

Public officials are legally responsible for creating and maintaining records that document government business transactions. These records provide evidence of government operations and accountability to citizens. Public officials must maintain this information according to established records disposition authorizations (RDAs). According to Section 10-7-509, *Tennessee Code Annotated*.

The disposition of all state records shall occur only through the process of an approved records disposition authorization. Records authorized for destruction shall be disposed of according to the records disposition authorization and shall not be given to any unauthorized person, transferred to another agency, political subdivision, or private or semiprivate institution.

RDAs describe the public record, retention period, and destruction method for each record type under an agency's authority. Agencies must submit a certificate of destruction to the Records Management Division after properly disposing of any public records according to their approved RDA.

In March 2013, the Records Management Division developed an online application to catalog and maintain RDAs, and the Public Records Commission asked all state agencies to amend or retire their existing RDAs and to create new ones for public records still in use. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth had three RDAs in March 2013. Since then, the commission has revised one RDA and retired the remaining two RDAs.

Commission's Records Management Process

The commission's Records Officer worked with a Records Analyst from the Records Management Division to ensure that all of the commission's public records are governed by an RDA. The Records Management Division conducted a public records assessment at the commission's office on April 20, 2018. The purpose of the assessment was to

- measure the commission's records management process;
- identify the RDAs used and if new ones were needed; and
- assess the volume of records for each RDA.

The division issued the assessment on April 27, 2018, and noted four recommendations.

Audit Results

1. Audit Objective: Did commission management ensure that the commission's RDAs as of March 2013 were revised or retired?

Conclusion: Commission management ensured that its existing RDAs were revised or retired.

2. Audit Objective: Did commission management ensure that all of the commission's public records were governed by an RDA?

Conclusion: While commission management did not ensure that one program area was governed by an RDA, management ensured that 11 of 12 program areas were governed by an RDA. See Observation 2.

3. Audit Objective: Did commission management implement the recommendations from the Records Management Division's assessment?

Conclusion: Commission management did not implement any of the recommendations from the Records Management Division's assessment. See Observation 2.

Methodology to Achieve Objectives

We interviewed the commission's Records Officer to gain an understanding of the records management process. We obtained and reviewed the Secretary of State's *Records Management Best Practices and Procedures* and *Tennessee Code Annotated* to assess the commission's records management processes. We reviewed the commission's RDAs and statewide RDAs to ensure compliance with statewide records management procedures and requirements.

Observation 2 – Commission management should implement the Records Management Division's recommendations and ensure that all of its public records are governed by a records disposition authorization

The Tennessee Department of State's Records Management Division recommended that the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth management should

• have staff training on proper records disposition authorization (RDA) procedures to educate and assist the commission in its records management efforts;

- create and revise RDAs to mitigate risks in current business practices;
- ensure that staff retain and delete electronic records according to their RDAs; and
- designate records coordinators in each division and meet regularly with the Records Officer.

As of March 31, 2019, the Executive Director stated that the commission had not implemented any of the recommendations from the public records assessment because of changes within commission management, beginning with the former Executive Director's retirement in June 2018. The Executive Director also stated that commission management did not understand the importance of the public records assessment's recommendations, because management perceived the report as a suggestion to help with future changes.

Additionally, commission management did not ensure that 1 of 12 commission programs and related councils, commission, and alliance (8%) reviewed had an RDA governing that program's public records as required by Section 10-7-509, *Tennessee Code Annotated*. Specifically, management did not ensure there was an RDA for the commission's regional councils' public records, such as membership lists, meeting announcements, and meeting sign-in sheets. The Records Officer stated that he did not think that the area had any public records, and, therefore, the program did not require an RDA.

If commission management does not implement the recommendations identified in the public records assessment, management risks noncompliance with required records management policies. Additionally, without approved RDAs in place for all public records, management cannot ensure that it has maintained the public records for an adequate public inspection period and/or for an audit.

The Executive Director should consider all the recommendations from the public records assessment and implement any that would benefit the commission's records management processes as soon as practical. The Executive Director should also work with the Records Management Division to ensure that all of the commission's public records are governed by an approved RDA.

Management's Comment

We concur. The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth (TCCY) will implement the Records Management Division's recommendations and ensure that all TCCY public records are governed by a records disposition authorization. Representatives from the Secretary of State's Records Management Division provided training to TCCY's Senior Leadership Team on April 8, 2019. Additionally, they provided training to all TCCY employees on May 8, 2019. The agency's Records Officer will work with each division to identify a Records Coordinator to ensure compliance with required records management policies and that appropriate and adequate records disposition authorizations are in place.

COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Section 37-3-102(b), *Tennessee Code Annotated*, empowers the Governor to appoint 21 volunteers to serve as commission members of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth and oversee the work of the agency. The commission must include

- one member from each of the state's nine development districts;
- representatives from the rural and urban areas of the state; and
- four youth members, individuals under the age of 28, as required by the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.

Section 37-3-102(b), Tennessee Code Annotated, states that commission members should have "demonstrated leadership, interest, knowledge and activities concerning the problems and needs of children and youth."

In addition, the statute also states that the Governor should "strive" to ensure that at least one person serving on the commission is at least 60 years old and that at least one person is a member of a racial minority. For a listing of commission members as of April 1, 2019, please see **Appendix 2** on page 28 of this report.

The commission meets quarterly as required by Section 37-3-102(d), *Tennessee Code Annotated*. At these meetings, commission members review and vote on items such as proposed changes to legislation. Article VI of the "Bylaws of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth" requires written notices of meetings and a one-third quorum, or seven members, at every meeting. It also requires commission staff to keep a record of all the commission's actions in each meeting to prepare meeting minutes. The Director of Operations and Special Projects electronically retains these meeting minutes. Additionally, the bylaws state that after "any member's three (3) successive absences from Commission meetings, the Chairperson may request the Governor to declare a vacancy and fill the unexpired term." The Director of Operations and Special Projects maintains meeting attendance sheets to track member absences and ensure that the commission meets its quorum requirements.

Conflict-of-Interest Disclosures for Commission Members

Section 7 of the commission's bylaws states that commission members are not "eligible to vote on a question in which he/she has a direct or indirect personal or monetary interest; however, such member will be permitted to participate in the discussion." To identify all potential direct and indirect interests, commission members complete an annual conflict-of-interest disclosure form.

At the beginning of the calendar year, the Director of Operations and Special Projects notifies commission members by email that they must submit a conflict-of-interest disclosure form and attaches a copy of the form to the email. Commission members must complete and submit the disclosure form by the first meeting of the year, which is typically held in February. The form requires the disclosure of basic personal information for each member such as the member's

- current and past employers,
- professional associations, including board memberships,

- financial interest in organizations that receive state funding or funding from the commission,
- debt obligations to the State of Tennessee, and
- family relationships that could represent a conflict of interest.

Conflict-of-Interest Disclosures for Commission Staff

According to the commission's *Employee Policies & Procedures Manual*, commission staff "must not engage in any activity in either a private or official capacity where a conflict of interest or perception of a conflict of interest may exist." As a result, commission staff must also complete an annual conflict-of-interest disclosure form.

In January 2015, the commission entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Human Resources to "manage and operate human resources functions" for the commission. The MOU states that the department will obtain and maintain the annual disclosure forms for the commission's staff. For calendar year 2016, commission staff completed paper conflict-of-interest disclosure forms, which were collected and maintained in their employee files at the Department of Human Resources. For calendar years 2017 and 2018, commission staff completed an electronic conflict-of-interest disclosure form in Edison, the state's accounting system. Commission management required staff to complete a paper conflict-of-interest disclosure form maintained by the Director of Operations and Special Projects for calendar year 2019, because the online form was not available.

Results of the Prior Audit

In the commission's July 2016 financial and compliance audit report, we reported that commission management did not ensure conflict-of-interest disclosure forms were on file for all commission members and staff. Management concurred with the prior finding and stated that all commission members and staff without a disclosure form would complete one and that new members and staff would complete a disclosure form upon appointment or hire, respectively.

Audit Results

1. Audit Objective: Did commission management issue public notices for meetings; create and retain meeting minutes; and ensure the commission met quorum requirements to comply with the "Bylaws of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth"?

Conclusion:

Commission management provided adequate public notice for meetings; created and maintained meeting minutes; and ensured that the commission had at least seven members present for all commission meetings during the audit period, January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2019, as required by the bylaws.

2. Audit Objective: In response to the prior audit finding, did commission management ensure that staff and commission members signed annual conflict-of-interest disclosure forms?

Conclusion: With the exception of minor deficiencies in calendar years 2016 and 2017,

commission staff obtained conflict-of-interest disclosure forms for

commission members and staff during the audit period.

3. Audit Objective: Did commission members recuse themselves from votes when there was a conflict of interest?

Conclusion: From our review of the meeting minutes for the audit period, commission

members recused themselves from official votes when there was a conflict

of interest.

4. Audit Objective: Did the commission meet four times a year in accordance with Section 37-3-

102(d), *Tennessee Code Annotated*, and were members who missed three or more meetings in a row replaced as required by the commission's bylaws?

Conclusion: The commission met four times each year during the audit period. From

our review of meeting attendance records, we found that commission members missed no more than three meetings consecutively, except for three members the commission determined were inactive. The commission

requested these members be replaced or accepted their resignation.

5. Audit Objective: Did commission management ensure that the Governor appointed

commission members who met the minimum requirements defined in

Section 37-3-102(b), Tennessee Code Annotated?

Conclusion: Commission management ensured that all appointees to the commission

had the necessary qualifications to serve in their positions.

Methodology to Achieve Objectives

We obtained and analyzed all available public notices and meeting minutes for the commission to determine if the commission met as required by statute and created and maintained minutes for each meeting.

To gain an understanding of the commission's conflict-of-interest process, we obtained and reviewed the commission's "Bylaws of the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth"; the commission's *Employee Policies & Procedures Manual*; and the Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Human Resources.

We obtained a list of commission staff as of February 13, 2019, and reviewed each staff member's conflict-of-interest disclosure form for the audit period, January 1, 2016, through March 31, 2019, to determine whether management ensured all staff had a disclosure form on file. We

obtained a list of commission members and reviewed each member's conflict-of-interest form for the audit period to determine whether the members disclosed any financial conflicts. We reviewed all available meeting minutes to verify that members abstained on actions related to a documented conflict. We also researched each member to determine whether the member met the statutory requirements to serve on the commission.

We obtained and reviewed commission meeting attendance sheets for the audit period to determine whether commission members attended meetings consistently, resigned, or were replaced by a newly appointed member, as well as ensure at least seven members were present for all commission meetings during the audit period.

STAFF TURNOVER ANALYSIS

Audit Results

Audit Objective: Did staffing turnover indicate problems with the Tennessee Commission on

Children and Youth's operations and its ability to meet its mission?

Conclusion: Based on our analysis of the commission's staffing levels from January 1, 2016,

through December 31, 2018, the commission experienced 2% turnover (an average of 1 individual) due to retirement. Based on the work performed during fieldwork, we did not find evidence that staff turnover resulted in problems with

the commission's operations or impeded its ability to meet its mission.

Methodology to Achieve Objective

To gain an understanding of the commission's average turnover, we performed and reconciled employee turnover percentages based upon queries in Edison, the state's accounting system.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth uses information systems to support its mission-critical business functions. The state's centralized computer service bureau, Strategic Technology Solutions (STS), manages the commission's network access and email; hosts the commission's files and application servers; and administers Edison, the state's accounting system.

Audit Results

Audit Objective: Did commission management follow state information system security

policies regarding information systems controls?

Conclusion: Commission management followed state information system security policies

regarding information system controls.

Methodology to Achieve Objective

To achieve our objective, we interviewed commission and STS staff to gain an understanding of the information systems security. We also reviewed applicable guidelines and performed testwork related to the security risks. We reviewed management's internal control activities to assess its adherence to the state information systems security policies and information systems industry best practices.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Budget and Actual Expenditures and Revenues for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2018

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth		Recommended Budget*	Actual Expenditures and Revenues†
Expenditures	Payroll	\$2,718,500.00	\$2,709,000.00
	Operational	\$2,542,300.00	\$2,484,000.00
	Total	\$5,260,800.00	\$5,193,000.00
Revenues	State	\$3,040,400.00	\$3,289,800.00
	Federal	\$1,228,100.00	\$ 476,200.00
	Other	\$ 992,300.00	\$1,427,000.00
	Total	\$5,260,800.00	\$5,193,000.00

^{*}Source: Tennessee State Budget, Fiscal Year 2017–2018. †Source: Tennessee State Budget, Fiscal Year 2019–2020.

Budget, Actual Expenditures, and Estimated Revenues for July 1, 2018, Through March 31, 2019

Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth		Recommended Budget‡	Actual Expenditures and Estimated Revenues§
Expenditures	Payroll	\$3,026,100.00	\$2,114,592.00
	Operational	\$2,726,800.00	\$1,732,003.00
	Total	\$5,752,900.00	\$3,846,595.00
Revenues	State	\$3,189,000.00	\$3,412,100.00
	Federal	\$1,228,100.00	\$1,228,100.00
	Other	\$1,335,800.00	\$1,355,800.00
	Total	\$5,752,900.00	\$5,996,000.00

[‡] Source: Tennessee State Budget, Fiscal Year 2018-2019.

[§] Source: Edison, state's accounting system (actual expenditures through March 31, 2019) and Tennessee State Budget, Fiscal Year 2019–2020 (estimated revenues for fiscal year 2019).

Appendix 2
Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth Commission Members
As of April 1, 2019

Name	Appointed By	Representing	Term End Date
Phil Acord	Governor	Southeast Region	6/30/2019
Hailey Brooks	Governor	Youth Member	6/30/2020
Brenda Davis, Commission Chair	Governor	Mid-Cumberland Region	6/30/2021
Kelly Drummond	Governor	East Region	6/30/2020
Ashley Dunkin	Governor	South Central Region	6/30/2020
Sharon Green	Governor	Northeast Region	6/30/2021
Genesis Hardin	Governor	Youth Member	6/30/2019
Jennie Harlan	Governor	South Central Region	6/30/2021
Lisa Hill	Governor	Memphis/Shelby Region	6/30/2021
Gary Houston	Governor	Northwest Region	6/30/2021
Amy Jones	Governor	Southwest Region	6/30/2020
Petrina Jones-Jesz	Governor	Mid-Cumberland Region	6/30/2021
Rob Mortensen, Commission Vice Chair	Governor	Mid-Cumberland Region	6/30/2020
Steven Neely	Governor	Mid-Cumberland Region	6/30/2019
Wendy Shea	Governor	Memphis-Shelby Region	6/30/2020
Christy Sigler, Audit Committee Chair	Governor	Mid-Cumberland Region	6/30/2020
Allan Sterbinsky	Governor	Southwest Region	6/30/2019
Altha J. Stewart	Governor	Memphis-Shelby Region	6/30/2019
Glenda Terry	Governor	Upper Cumberland Region	6/30/2019
Vacant ²⁰	Governor	Youth Member	-
Vacant ²⁰	Governor	Youth Member	-

Source: https://www.tn.gov/tccy/about/commission/tccy-commission-meeting-and-members.html

²⁰ Two commission members resigned on March 4, 2019, leading to these vacancies. Commission management has notified the Governor's Office that these two positions need to be filled with new appointments.